

What is Claimed

1. A fifth wheel hitch assembly, comprising:
  - a base assembly for mounting to a towing vehicle;
  - a head assembly carried on said base assembly; and
  - a jaw assembly carried on said head assembly, said jaw assembly including a jaw body having a stepped bearing surface for engaging a king pin of a trailer.
- 5 2. The hitch assembly of claim 1, wherein said jaw assembly further includes a control handle and a connecting link, said connecting link being pivotally connected to said control handle by a first pivot pin and to said jaw body by a second pivot pin.
3. The hitch assembly of claim 2, wherein said head assembly includes a skid plate and a mounting platform.
4. The hitch assembly of claim 3, wherein said jaw body is pivotally mounted on said mounting platform by means of a third pivot pin.
5. The hitch assembly of claim 4, further including a grease zerk provided on said third pivot pin.

6. The hitch assembly of claim 5 wherein said head assembly includes a skid plate and a grease zerk access aperture is provided in said skid plate near said grease zerk.

7. The hitch assembly of claim 4, wherein said jaw assembly further includes a first spring having a first end connected to said jaw body and a second end connected to said mounting platform.

8. The hitch assembly of claim 4, wherein said jaw assembly further includes a first spring having a first end connected to said jaw body and a second end connected to said first pivot pin.

9. The hitch assembly of claim 4, wherein said jaw assembly further includes a first spring having a first end connected to said jaw body and a second end connected to said head assembly.

10. The hitch assembly of claim 4, wherein said jaw assembly further includes a first spring having a first end connected to said jaw body and a second end connected to said head assembly and a second spring having a third end connected to said head assembly and a fourth end connected to said first pivot pin.

11. The hitch assembly of claim 2, wherein said head assembly includes at least two slots for receiving said control handle, said slots being dimensioned to allow said control handle to slide freely through said slots.

12. The hitch assembly of claim 11, wherein said control handle includes a notch that may be brought into engagement with said head assembly by shifting said control handle transversely in said two slots.

13. The hitch assembly of claim 2, wherein said jaw body is displaceable between an open position and a closed position, said connecting link passing over center when said jaw is displaced between said open and closed positions.

14. The hitch assembly of claim 1, wherein said stepped bearing surface includes a first step having a height of about 0.56 to about 0.81 inches and a tread of about 0.375 to about 0.625 inches and a second step having a height of about 0.43 to about 0.69 inches.

15. The hitch assembly of claim 1, wherein said stepped bearing surface includes a first step having a height of about 0.69 inches and a tread of about 0.5 inches and a second step having a height of about 0.56 inches.

16. A fifth wheel hitch assembly, comprising:  
a base assembly for mounting to a towing vehicle;  
a head assembly carried on said base assembly; and  
a jaw assembly carried on said head assembly, said jaw  
5 assembly including a jaw body, a control handle and a connecting link, said connecting link being pivotally connected to said control handle by a first pivot pin and to said jaw body by a second pivot pin.

17. The fifth wheel hitch assembly of claim 16, wherein said jaw body is displaceable between an open position and a closed position, said connecting link passing over center when said jaw is displaced between said open and closed positions.

18. The hitch assembly of claim 17, wherein said jaw assembly further includes a first spring having a first end connected to said jaw body.

19. The hitch assembly of claim 18, wherein said first spring has a second end and said second end is connected to said first pivot pin.

20. The hitch assembly of claim 18, wherein said first spring has a second end and said second end is connected to said head assembly.

21. The hitch assembly of claim 18, wherein said first spring has a second end and said second end is connected to said head assembly.

22. The hitch assembly of claim 18, wherein said jaw assembly further includes a second spring, said second spring being connected between said first pivot pin and said head assembly.

23. The hitch assembly of claim 16, wherein said head assembly includes at least two slots for receiving said control handle, said slots being dimensioned to allow said control handle to slide freely through said slots.

24. The hitch assembly of claim 16, wherein said control handle includes a notch that may be brought into engagement with said head assembly by shifting said control handle transversely in said two slots.

25. A jaw assembly, comprising:  
a jaw body;  
a control handle; and  
a connecting link, said connecting link being pivotally  
5 connected to said control handle and to said jaw body.

26. The jaw assembly of claim 25, wherein said jaw body is displaceable between an open position and a closed position, said connecting link passing over center when said jaw body is displaced between said open and closed positions.

27. The jaw assembly of claim 25, wherein said jaw body includes a stepped bearing surface.

28. The jaw assembly of claim 25, wherein said stepped bearing surface includes a first step having a height of about 0.56 to about 0.81 inches and a tread of about 0.375 to about 0.625 inches and a second step having a height of about 0.43 to about 0.69 inches.

29. The jaw assembly of claim 25, wherein said stepped bearing surface includes a first step having a height of about 0.69 inches and a tread of about 0.5 inches and a second step having a height of about 0.56 inches.

30. A jaw for a fifth wheel hitch assembly, comprising:  
a jaw body including a stepped bearing surface.
31. The jaw of claim 30, wherein said stepped bearing surface includes a first step having a height of about 0.56 to about 0.81 inches and a tread of about 0.375 to about 0.625 inches and a second step having a height of about 0.43 to about 0.69 inches.
32. The jaw of claim 30, wherein said stepped bearing surface includes a first step having a height of about 0.69 inches and a tread of about 0.5 inches and a second step having a height of about 0.56 inches.